

replaced Steve Dungan as the Selectmen's representative to LACAC in June, and Steve stayed on as an Associate Member.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Bernklow
Chris Funkhouser
Robert Glorioso
Len Golder
Lisa Lavina

Stephen Dungan, Associate

Anne VanTine, Stow TV Coordinator
Kathy O'Keefe, Assistant Coordinator

VETERANS SERVICES

Director's Report

To the Honorable Board of Selectmen, the Town Administrator, the Citizens, and the Veteran Community of Stow, this report is submitted for the year ending 2011.

Veterans' Benefits

Veterans' Benefits are governed under Chapter 115 of the Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L. c. 115) and Commonwealth of Massachusetts Regulations 108 (C.M.R. 108). Benefits assist qualified needy veterans and their dependants based on income levels and in accordance with the Budget Standards Chart. The Town of Stow is reimbursed 75% by the State for veterans' assistance payments issued by this office.

The Director of Veterans' Services is responsible for determining the eligibility of all cases processed through this office. The Director conducts interviews, establishes approvals, and conducts follow-up on veterans receiving assistance. Field investigations within the local community are also performed by this office to determine the recipients' continued eligibility to receive benefits.

Veterans' Services also include assisting Stow veterans in filing federal forms for benefits, which include service-connected disability claims, non-service-connected claims, VA health care, requests for medals, requests for service records, bonus applications, burial assistance and other federal benefits such as counseling in vocational rehabilitation and employment.

Additionally, the Director acts under Power of Attorney for veterans researching and processing cases to the Rating Review Board (Department of Veteran Services), and prepares appeal cases for the Board of Veterans' Appeals on the veteran's behalf. The Director also acts as liaison between State and U.S. Representatives on behalf of veterans and their dependants.

Office

This department assisted 97 Veterans and family members' requests for Federal, State, and Local Veteran benefits, some of which included Burial assistance, Service-Connected disability, Aid and Attendance, Pension, VA Healthcare, Annuities, and Exemptions in addition to State Chapter 115 assistance.

Salute

This past year I have had the opportunity to serve as President of the Veterans Association (2nd term). The work of the association provides Massachusetts Veterans Officers the opportunity to collaborate with state legislators regarding the laws that govern Massachusetts Veterans. The Association awarded two \$500 scholarships to two high school seniors entering college. Additionally, the Association has worked with local companies this past year to identify Veterans searching for career opportunities. The Association also worked together with State and Federal government organizations to reduce the homeless veteran population in Massachusetts by 21% this past year.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Stearns, Director